

members in the dark. The budgeting process that brought us this bill at 3:30 a.m. must change. Congress needs to find a better way to fund day-to-day government operations without jeopardizing funding for critical initiatives and programs by a process that is too partisan and deeply divided.

Even though I object to the process which brought us this bill, I will support its final passage because it contains a number of provisions which are absolutely essential for the people in my district. These provisions include relief for rural hospitals hit hard by the Balanced Budget Act of 1977 (BBA), access to local stations for rural satellite TV viewers, critical protections for dairy farmers, and the hiring of teachers and law enforcement officers.

Health care providers in rural East Texas have been hit exceptionally hard by the BBA changes. Many hospitals in East Texas receive 55-75% of revenue from Medicare. The budget package includes an agreement that would give hospitals, nursing homes, home health care agencies and other health care providers relief from cuts in Medicare payments that was enacted under the 1997 Balanced Budget Act.

This agreement will provide an estimated \$12.8 billion over five years in additional Medicare payments for hospitals, home health care agencies, managed care plans and other health providers. It also includes provisions targeted at small hospitals and rural hospitals. In addition to a higher rate of reimbursement for these institutions, the bill allows them to increase the number of residency positions they are allowed to offer.

Hospital outpatient departments will also see relief. The agreement includes a provision stating that Congress never intended to impose a 5.7% cut in payments to hospital outpatient departments. This provision will restore these payments, reimbursing hospitals about \$4.2 billion over five years. This is critical for the financial security of our rural hospitals in East Texas. Patients' care options will be preserved with this provision, and the quality of care will be preserved.

The budget bill also contains important provisions which would allow satellite TV viewers access to local programming. Until now, satellite providers have been barred from transmitting the signals of local broadcast stations back to subscribers in the same local market. This legislation, however, contains important provisions of the Satellite Home View Act, which recently passed the House with overwhelming support.

In addition to allowing satellite carriers to transmit local broadcast signals back to subscribers in the same local market, this legislation would also eliminate the current 90-day waiting period before cable subscribers can switch to satellite service. These provisions are good news for satellite viewers who have been unfairly left deprived of access to local weather, news, and programming.

With regard to dairy, the agreement includes policy provisions that direct the USDA to implement its proposed "Option 1-A" Class 1 differential milk pricing structure. By doing so, the measure blocks portions of USDA's preferred milk marketing orders reform plan (Option 1-B) and essentially preserves the status quo in milk pricing for Texas.

This is a victory for Texas dairy farmers. If Option 1-B had been implemented, Texas dairy farmers would have lost \$56 million in producer income. With this agreement, we are preventing that loss and preserving the East Texas dairy farm.

The budget also contains a number of important Democratic victories, including funding for 100,000 new teachers, after school programs, Head Start, school construction, and the COPS program. These victories also include extensions of important tax credits for research and development, the Work Incentive tax credit, Welfare to Work credit, and Alternative Minimum Tax relief for individuals.

This year we have also given our service men and women a pay raise and provided funding for increased workload at Red River Army Depot. Specifically, the FY00 budget appropriates \$384 million for upgrading the Bradley Fighting Vehicle. Finally, this bill puts aside \$147 billion for reducing the national debt and helping ensure that future generations can share in the economic prosperity we are now experiencing as a nation.

Although I am pleased with the positive aspects of this bill, I am deeply disturbed by its more troubling provisions. Those include an arbitrary across-the-board cut upon which Republicans have insisted. Instead of eliminating the irresponsible member earmarks that load up this budget with unnecessary spending or cutting Member pay raises, Republicans have opted for a damaging, indiscriminate across-the-board cut. Moreover, they rely on accounting gimmicks to disguise the real spending in this bill, and they tell us this budget won't break the caps. This bill has not been scored, so we have no choice but to accept Republican claims that it won't dip into the Social Security trust fund.

I find the Republicans' failure to cut the Congressional pay raise particularly unconscionable. This bill would actually exempt the Congressional pay raise from the across-the-board cut. This provision is extremely upsetting, considering that Congress twice voted against this exemption.

Republican tactics throughout the budget process have produced an imperfect bill. Their unwillingness to negotiate with Democrats from the beginning is the reason behind this 11th hour budget bill. Unfortunately, Republicans put off budget negotiations until the very last minute in favor of partisan rhetoric and have thereby prevented Congress from passing a Patients' Bill of Rights, funding a Medicare prescription drug benefit for seniors, increasing the minimum wage for working Americans, and providing meaningful tax relief for families.

These realities make it especially difficult for me to cast my vote in favor of this bill. The most troubling consequence of this bill is the potentially detrimental effect of the across-the-board cut on veterans' healthcare. I will vote for the Motion to Recommit for this reason, and for all the other reasons I have cited, in hopes that these problems can be addressed before final passage of the bill.

However, should the Motion to Recommit fail, I will support final passage because, although it is imperfect, this bill is a product of lengthy negotiations. I accept that negotiation requires compromise, and not everyone will

agree on every aspect of a compromise. All in all, I support this bill because, despite its shortcomings, it is good news for the people of East Texas.

BERNARDO FORT-BRESCIA AND LAURINDA SPEAR INDUCTED TO THE INTERIOR DESIGN MAGAZINE HALL OF FAME

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 22, 1999

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Bernardo Fort-Brescia and his wife, Laurinda Spear, on being inducted as members of the 1999 Interior Design Magazine Hall of Fame.

In 1977, Bernardo and Laurinda, both graduates of Ivy League architectural schools, founded the Miami based Arquitectonica which has been making headlines with a brand of unconventional modernism that combines clarity and formal rigor with unusual daring in color and wit. The firm's designs have won numerous awards from the American Institute of Architects and Progressive Architecture.

Bernardo and Laurinda have worked on many memorable designs, including the Miami City Ballet headquarters in Miami Beach, the American Airlines Arena in Miami, and the future Westin New York at Times Square on New York's 42nd Street. These projects have been featured in many magazines and professional journals including Time, Newsweek, Domus, and Architectural Digest. Bernardo and Laurinda have lectured around the world and their work had been exhibited in many prestigious museums and galleries throughout the Western Hemisphere and Europe.

I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating Bernard Fort-Brescia, FAIA and Laurinda Spear, FAIA on their induction to the 1999 Interior Design Magazine Hall of Fame.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2116, VETERANS MILLENNIUM HEALTH CARE AND BENEFITS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 1999

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2116, the Veterans Millennium Health Care Act of 1996. As a conferee on this legislation, I am grateful the Senate accepted one particular provision, my proposal to add bronchiolo alveolar carcinoma to the Department of Veterans Affairs presumption list for radiogenic cancers.

For the last ten years, I have worked to add this lung cancer to the VA's presumption list for service-connected veterans. During the 104th and 105th Congresses, the House passed my legislation to add this cancer to the VA's presumption list. This year, we have convinced our Senate colleagues of the need to put this provision into law because of the VA's

continual denial of most claims by atomic veterans and their survivors.

Bronchiolo alveolar carcinoma is not considered a smoker's cancer. During a recent class action lawsuit in the state of Florida, the jury specifically excluded bronchiolo alveolar carcinoma from the list of lung cancers compensable due to smoking. Furthermore, the National Research Council cited Department of Energy studies in the BEIR V report stating that "bronchiolo alveolar carcinoma is the most common cause of delayed death from inhaled plutonium 239."

I know of this firsthand because I have been working with Joan McCarthy, a New Jersey resident, who lost her husband, Tom, to bronchiolo alveolar carcinoma in 1981. Tom had served as the navigator on the U.S.S. *McKinley* which participated in Operation Wigwam, an underwater atomic test in the Pacific that produced a surge of mist which Tom inhaled. Twenty-five years later, Tom died of lung cancer, a father and husband who was only in his early forties. Passage of the Veterans Millennium Health Care Act today will add this cancer to the VA's presumption list and thus ensure that Joan McCarthy and other veterans and their widows receive the compensation which they need and deserve.

I am also proud of this bill's long-term care provisions for our nation's veterans. It reflects the months of heavy lifting that the House Veterans' Affairs Committee has done on this issue as America's veterans community gets older and consequently needs quality health care.

Another provision which I authored as free standing legislation and is now in the conference report is a respite care provision. For the first time, we are giving the VA the ability to contract out for respite care services. Until now, if a veteran's care giver, be it his spouse or adult child, needed a short break, their only recourse was to wait for a bed to be made available at either a VA or state nursing home. The extra burden of transporting the veterans almost makes this self-defeating and it is witnessed by the fact that only 232 cases of respite care were provided by the VA during the 1998 fiscal year.

The need for respite care cannot be underestimated. A few years ago, my wife, Marie, was the primary care giver for my mother who was dying of brain cancer. We chose to take care of her in our home and my wife was the one who saw to her needs. Consequently, I know how important it is for the care giver, as well as the veteran, to be provided with the occasional day off so that they might attend to their own lives for a few hours or a few days. In the long run, this will significantly improve the quality of life and care of our veterans and unquestionably save the VA money in the long run. Most Americans want to remain in their own homes or with their families for as long as possible.

The benefits of respite care cannot be understated. According to the Caregiver Assistance Network, family and volunteer caregivers provide 85% of all home care given in the United States. However, our veterans' caregivers need our help. In a California statewide survey taken by the Family Caregiver Alliance, 58% of the caregivers showed signs of clinical depression. When asked, they responded that

their two greatest needs were emotional support and respite care. On average, they are providing 10.5 hours of care per day. Providing the VA with the ability to contract with the nearest nursing home, adult day care center or sending someone to the veterans' home will make a real difference in the day to day quality of life for a veteran and his or her family.

The Veterans Millennium Health Care Act also requires the VA to provide needed nursing home care for veterans who are 70% service-connected or in need of such care for a service-connected condition. It also lifts the VA's six month limit on adult day health care and it allows the VA to expand the scope of the state home program to encompass all extended care services such as respite care, adult day health care, domiciliary care, and other alternatives to institutional care. It also guarantees emergency care for uninsured veterans and reinstates preferential eligibility for recipients of the Purple Heart. It also requires the VA to establish a policy regarding chiropractic treatment, a provision which I first introduced as legislation during my first term in Congress. And finally, it authorizes payments to the surviving spouses of former POWs who were rated totally disabled due to any service-connected cause for a period of one or more years immediately prior to death.

I urge my colleagues to join me in passing the Veterans Millennium Health Care Act.

LIST OF COSPONSORS

HON. GARY G. MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 22, 1999

Mr. GARY MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, the following is a list of my colleagues who requested to be cosponsors of H.R. 3189: Representative JOHN DOOLITTLE, Representative ROBERT MATSUI, Representative TOM LANTOS, Representative ANNA ESHOO, Representative SAM FARR, Representative LOIS CAPPS, Representative ELTON GALLEGLEY, Representative BRAD SHERMAN, Representative BUCK McKEON, Representative HOWARD BERMAN, Representative DAVID DREIER, Representative HENRY WAXMAN, Representative MATTHEW MARTINEZ, Representative JULIAN DIXON, Representative MAXINE WATERS, Representative JUANITA MILLENDER-MCDONALD, Representative STEVE HORN, Representative JERRY LEWIS, Representative KEN CALVERT, Representative MARY BONO, Representative DANA ROHRBACHER, Representative LORETTA SANCHEZ, Representative CHRIS COX, Representative RON PACKARD, Representative BRIAN BILBRAY, Representative BOB FILNER, Representative DUKE CUNNINGHAM, and Representative DUNCAN HUNTER.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3194,
CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS
AND DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

SPEECH OF

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to explain the Commerce, Justice, State, and Judiciary portion of H.R. 3194, making consolidated appropriations for fiscal year 2000. The revised conference report for the fiscal year 2000 Commerce, Justice, State and Judiciary appropriation was introduced as a separate bill, H.R. 3421, and is referenced in the final consolidated appropriations measure, H.R. 3194, adopted in the House last Wednesday.

H.R. 3421 incorporates the conference report for the original bill, H.R. 2670, plus additional items negotiated since the veto of the first conference report. This is to highlight the changes from House Report 106-398, the conference report on H.R. 2670.

Let me first highlight the funding changes.

H.R. 3421 provides an additional \$616,282,000 in funding, after scorekeeping adjustments.

Under the Department of Justice, it provides an additional \$151,782,000, including the following: (1) \$140,000,000 for the COPS program—\$117,500,000 for hiring, \$10,000,000 for community prosecutors; and \$12,500,000 for management and administration; and it moves \$130,000,000 for crime identification technology from State and Local Law Enforcement to COPS; (2) \$10,635,000 for General Legal Activities—\$10,053,000 for Civil Rights Division; and \$582,000 for Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States; and (3) \$1,147,000 for the U.S. Parole Commission.

Under the Department of Commerce, it provides an additional \$45,000,000, including: (1) \$30,000,000 for NOAA Operations, Research and Facilities—\$5,000,000 for the Pacific Salmon Treaty, \$6,000,000 for coral reefs, \$5,500,000 for Marine Sanctuaries, \$2,000,000 for fisheries habitat restoration, \$11,000,000 for Endangered Species Act activities, and \$500,000 for GLOBE; (2) \$7,000,000 for NOAA Procurement, Acquisition and Construction—\$3,000,000 for Marine Sanctuaries, and \$4,000,000 for National Estuarine Research Reserves; and (3) \$8,000,000 for the Pacific Salmon Recovery Fund—\$4,000,000 for Tribes and \$2,000,000 each for California and Oregon.

Under the Department of State, it provides an additional \$347,000,000, including: (1) \$47,000,000 for Diplomatic and Consular Programs—\$5,000,000 for the Pacific Salmon Treaty; and \$42,000,000 for activities in the Kosovo region and the WTO ministerial, with up to \$5,000,000 for the latter; and (2) \$300,000,000 for Contributions for International Peacekeeping.

For Related Agencies, it provides an additional \$81,500,000, including: (1) \$3,000,000 for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; (2) \$5,000,000 for the Legal Services Corporation; (3) \$36,000,000 for SBA Salaries